

*D. Chandler*

*July 30*

*1847*

**PRICE, 12 1-2 CENTS.**

THE  
**LIFE AND DEATH**  
OF  
**MRS. MARIA BICKFORD,**

A Beautiful Female, who was

**INHUMANLY MURDERED,**

In the Moral and Religious City of Boston, on the  
night of the 27th of October, 1845, by

**ALBERT J. TIRRELL,**

Her Paramour, arrested on board the Ship Sultana,  
off New Orleans, December 6th.



BY A CLERGYMAN, OF BRUNSWICK, ME.

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## PREFACE.

"I COME NOT TO DESTROY."—*Our Savior.*

For the principal facts embodied in the following narrative, the Author is indebted to the ill-fated female who is the subject of them. It was his lot to be the bearer of a letter to her, in the spring of 1845, from a companion of her childhood. Aware of her forlorn condition, and of many acts of atrocity which characterized the latter part of her erring life, he made it his purpose to learn the history of her career, which was frankly communicated by her own lips.

The Author tenders his acknowledgments to the person who generously placed in his hands the original letters which reveal the passion flame of her FIRST LOVE with a medical student of Brunswick, in Maine. The contents of these letters establish the fact that this student became her seducer, and that he afterwards heartlessly abandoned her to remorse, and the jeers of a scoffing world. She was but fifteen years of age at the time of writing the letters, and they evince not only much purity and depth of feeling, but likewise a mind endowed with rare gifts.

It is not a pleasing duty to record the vicissitudes of the unfortunate. To draw aside the veil which conceals the cherished treasures, the blighted hopes, and the undying remorse of an erring soul, traced through long seasons of unredeeming, rayless wo, is to perform a labor for the benefit of the living. In this the author has striven to be faithful, impartial, and truthful.

Life, as a spectacle, is but dimly seen and feebly comprehended; as a mystery, it is unfathomable indeed. Blown, as it were, a bubble—dark as the transgressions by which it is checkered, it bursts in an hour we know not, as the globe of glass is dashed into fragments. We look on the wreck, and wonder why it had a being, to gather in its train a multitudinous throng of evils, and make its exit in ignominy and shame. The author, it will be seen, is a fatalist—a believer in an unalterable destiny. It is unnecessary here to enter into a defence of that belief—he hopes that all people have an opinion of their own upon this, as on other subjects.

Ye rich and great! ye poor and destitute---children of sin and wanderers from virtue---ye world wronged! cast your eyes over the panorama spread out to your view in the following pages, and, from the sounding depths of crime, learn lessons of wisdom.

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## CHAPTER I.

*Maria's Birth—Strange Omens at the time of it—Speculations of the Old Maids and Old Women concerning the same—Singular Traits of her Youth—Mysterious Spiritual Visitings—Meditations in the Woods and Fields—Theology and Philosophy—Penitence—Remarks—What constitutes True Religion?*

MRS. MARIA BICKFORD was a native of Oldtown, a small parish near the city of Bangor, in Maine—the daughter of poor but respectable parents. Her maiden name was Dunn. She was born in the year 1822, and was, consequently, twenty-three years old at the period of her awful and untimely end. It is said of her, that, from earliest childhood,



she had been the sport of ill omens and startling reverses. At her birth, which occurred before sunrise on a beautiful morning in autumn, a light of strange radiance shone into the apartment, and a sparrow fluttered against the window panes, uttering a plaintive wail, as if seeking admittance.

Whether these occurrences were the results of unexplained natural causes, or were the foreshadowings of an invisible fate, the judgment is not for us to pronounce—perhaps a future life and another world will interpret them. But certain it is, that their recital made a most fruitful theme for conjecture with the wonder-loving neighborhood, at the time. Old maids tied their cap-strings with a double knot for many a night thereafter.\* Old women spun long yarns while smoking their old-fashioned iron pipes in the chimney corners—and the old men scoffed at what they declared to be ridiculous. However it might have been, a marked singularity of thought and action was developed in the succeeding years of Maria's youth. Her childish prattle was unlike that of other children—she saw not as others see—she heard not as others hear—she laughed not as others laugh—but in all and with all there seemed to be a new development---a strangeness.

At about the seventh year of her age, those visitings of mysterious thoughtfulness which, in after years, imparted to her a peculiar fame, first began to be observed. During the recurrence of these periods she would remain for hours unmoved, regardless of all that was passing around her---as if in communion with the ascended spirit of some loved playmate, or in happy contemplation of the joys to be realized far away in the dim future. It was then that she discovered charms in solitude. Alone, in the fields and in the woods, she laughed with the flowers, and talked with the shadows of the trees---and that oaken giant, near her father's house, which had sternly derided the blasts of many centuries, creaked as though it were glad when Maria came, as she often did, and leaned against its brawny trunk, and exchanged salutations with the sentinel of time.

"They say I have a soul," she would say, in a revery, "an immortal soul---that a good man, who was the son of God, died for me, that I might live. What have I done to need such an awful atonement? Is it very wrong to while the Sabbath hours away, out here, with these birds, and bees, and squirrels? Is it a sin to love these pretty violets?---And this cool shade, too, and the breeze which fans me so gently---how calmly I sleep, and how pleasant are my dreams, in their refreshing presence! But they tell me it is not right to cherish the endearments of this world. It is neglecting God. I will kneel down here and pray."

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\*In almost every town and village in New England may be found a coterie or "fraternity" of old women and elderly spinsters, who seem to have retained all the characteristics of the early Puritans, and who cling pertinaciously to the superstitious notions and puritanical bigotry which distinguished the early settlers of the country. They are firm and sincere believers in all the hobgoblin stories and supernatural omens which have been handed down by a former generation. They give full credence to tales of prophetic warnings given to mortals in dreams, and profess to interpret the meaning of remarkable visions, whether for good or for evil. This sisterhood also keep a general supervision of the conduct of the good people of their immediate neighborhood. They can inform you of the age, personal appearance, present circumstances, and future prospects of every male and female within their circuit. No stranger can remain in the place twenty-four hours without having his character, and the nature of his business, thoroughly investigated, and duly reported to the people of the neighborhood. They are the constant attendants of protracted religious gatherings, sewing societies, and tea parties, and, good pious souls, they will attend to every body's business but their own. They are the fountain from whence springs all the scandal of the place, and the active agents for its circulation---and woe be to him or her who is, perhaps innocently, the subject of their regards. The members of this sisterhood are peculiar for the suavity of their bearing---for elongated visages, sharp noses, thin lips---and for usually wearing "spectacles on nose."



And this was Maria's theology. What a mistake it is to teach the young to restrain their love of nature in the desire of "serving God!" As though his works had not the impress of his greatness and beneficence! We cannot but regard this very prevalent practice as the vulgar offspring of ignorance: and we trust that the time is at hand when the religion of nature will assume, in the human mind, the place and importance so long usurped by the hypocritical and soul-deadening religion of formality.\* What honest heart can entertain a doubt that Maria returned from her Sunday rambles amid the luxuriance and enlivening beauties of nature, a purer and better child than when she had, all the tiresome day, been listening to the dry and repulsive jabbering of a hireling pulpit sycophant? Oh, had the wisdom of the child been the monitor of the woman, varied and sweet would have been the closing years of the life of Maria Dunn.

## CHAPTER II.

*Educational Trainings—Maria's Departure from her Childhood's Home—Musings in the Coach—The Seeress of Lucky Basin—Maria's Interview with her—The Result, and the Mystery—Fate imprisoned by Sealing-wax—Burning Words from a Crow-quill—The Fatal Promise—A Terrible Dream—Arrival at Brunswick.*

MARIA was blessed with kind and doting parents, who, in the plenitude of their regards for her welfare, were inexorably solicitous that her whole youth might be devoted to the acquirement of knowledge. Themselves ignorant of the common rudiments of education, of course they

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\* Let these remarks by no means be understood as reflecting censure upon the sincere worship of God, as taught and practised by the meek and lowly Jesus. All honor, and praise, and glory to such religion. But a system of pretence at present usurps dominion over the human soul. In the place of true piety sits a monster not less hideous than damnable: this is the thousand faced giant, Hypocrisy. There is a market for all religion now-a-days—and men preach and pray, with the love of God on their lips and the love of Mammon in their hearts. The pulpit has become an engine for increasing in riches. How long is it since the sainted and gifted PIERPONT was thrust from the Hollis Street Church, in Boston, for opposing the devilish traffic of the bloated rum-seller? Pouring honied phrases into the ears of heartless capitalists, at the rate of \$4000 a year, has grown into a trade! Raising a breeze to extort enormous sums of money from the credulous, to be lavished on the construction of immense piles of stone, each surmounted by a bell and weathercock, is but another mode of swindling. Not less than twelve hundred millions of dollars have been filched from the earnings of the poor, to rear the churches now standing in the United States. Were this amount expended in the amelioration of plundered humanity, how much joy and peace would reign where now are hideous want, dark crime, and hopeless death!

The church establishment is at this time the bulwark of Slavery in the United States.

Oh, not for the organization of such a wicked machinery came our Savior into the world! Not so did he teach by example! By the sea-shore he made disciples, among the rude fishermen; by the water fount he taught the maiden to draw from the well of immortality; out on the hill-top he proclaimed his mission of love and salvation. But now the money-changers are again in the temple. Civilization has practically set at naught the maxims of Christ, and made the house of God a "den of thieves." The modern church is the mother of more of the privations daily experienced by the poor and destitute (from which is born the Mystery of Iniquity) than any other extorting invention of Mammon. *Privations*, did we say? No. "*Privation*" (in the language of Sue) "poorly expresses that continuous and terrible destitution—the want of every thing which is necessary to clothe that life which God has given, with common comfort. *Mortification* would more suitably express the total absence of that security which society, equitably organized, owes—yes, actually owes—to every honest laborer, inasmuch as poverty, through civilization, has deprived these of any right to that soil which God made a free legacy to all. The savage does not enjoy the benefits of civilization—but he has at least the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, whereon to feed—and the great woods to warm and shelter him. The civilized poor man, whom civilization has disinherited of these gifts of God, has a right to demand, in return for the hard labor by which he enriches the world, a remuneration which will procure the permanent comforts of life."



were incapable of selecting the best methods of instruction. Knowledge, they imagined, came from the school-house. It was manufactured there by some peripatetic old bachelor. To school, then, Maria must go, armed with a spelling-book, at first, and afterwards, an arithmetic : and at school the golden, unreturning hours of her youth rolled into the lap of oblivion, until time had notched her fourteenth year upon his dial. And now there was to be a change in her tuition. Arrangements were completed for her attendance at the high school in Brunswick, an interesting little village, some seventy-five miles distant. The day of departure, for the first time, from beneath the paternal roof, was an important event in her life. It was at hand. She bore it with but little apparent emotion, and brushed from her cheek but a single tear.

“Adieu, ye pensive shades and early joys ! I will not say farewell. They tell me there is a recompense for every sacrifice—but my swelling heart—”

The remainder of the sentence was not uttered. The clock struck nine, and the rattling of wheels announced the coach for Brunswick. On this occasion it was full of passengers of high and low degree, from far and near—all strangers. The driver was belated and impatient. In a few moments all was in readiness, and Maria opened the wicket gate, which seemed to swing reluctantly upon its hinges, and entered the coach.

Along they went, at full gallop, leaving grove, and meadow, and friend, and every cherished thing, behind. It was a July morning. The air was soft and fragrant, and merrily the birds rang out their joyful songs. Though laden with heaviness of spirit, Maria could not but be pleased with the new sights that met her view, and the sounds that saluted her ears.

“And this is the world, the great and wicked world, of which I have heard so much—so long desired to see. How enchanting ! And how favored are they who can travel it all over ! Such fortunes and pleasures are not mine ; they never can be, for I am poor and helpless. But it must be so. Well, I will be contented with a humbler lot : there are millions who are even less fortunate. It is my destiny : I am satisfied.”

These were silent reflections. On and on they rode. Now they ascended a mountain, now launched into a valley, and jolted across a pole-bridge. At length the tall pines laid their shadows on the earth, and other thoughts came into her mind—other emotions into her heart. Day’s parting smile played upon the green foliage, and soon the mellow light announced a golden sunset. Half an hour after this, the driver reined his wearied horses up to a dilapidated hotel, in front of which dangled an old sign, bearing the words, “Half-way House.” They all alighted, to tarry for the night.

This place is known, to this day, by the appellation of the “Lucky Basin,” a title which it then bore. Now (as then) there may be seen some eight or ten slab-sided houses, the largest and best of which is the hotel. Here might have been found, at that time, a very select community, whose reigning queen was a shrivelled old Quakeress who, during twenty years, and until death made a requisition upon her bony frame, enjoyed a world-wide reputation as a fortune-teller. And really a good old dame was she, in head and in heart ; for it appeared that not only the name, but the good fortune of the place, was attributable to her fame ; that, but for her, the poverty-stricken habitations thereabouts,



with their inmates, would have gone to perdition long before. She was respected and venerated, of course, and loaded with caresses, praises, and blessings, by the whole circle of her dependent neighbors—and she was surely a true philosopher's stone to them, in her own person, even if there was no virtue in that green pebble which the old lady pretended to have received by spiritual bequest, and which was always wrapped in a shiny covering.

It would be out of our province here to enter into any lengthened commentary on fortune-telling. This much we will allow—that when we hear of any helpless woman turning her wits to account in that manner, thereby delighting the countless votaries of curiosity, and earning a lucrative livelihood for herself at the same time, we rejoice heartily, for her sake. Now no one of “the profession” ever made sharper guesses than Quakeress Jemima Soule, (that was her name,) and deep was the frequent surprise thereat. And it was sometimes truly marvellous that her predictions were fulfilled with such exactness. She was honored with visits from many seemingly intelligent persons, some residing more than three hundred miles distant. And when we consider the excitement produced upon those who lived in her own vicinity, or not farther away than a day's ride, we need not wonder at the fact that Lucky Basin was thronged with anxious, and often bewitching faces, at a rate of not less than three thousand a year.

And let it not be supposed that her visitors were only from among the poorer classes of society. Her widely-spread fame frequently excited deep anxiety among many wealthy persons, who never failed, in their visits, to reward her with gold: and thus was she enabled to extend the sphere of her unostentatious benevolence, and to secure the fervent blessings of the unfortunate.

Maria regarded the present opportunity of being able to see the renowned Seeress, and of having her own fortune read from the book of fate, with inexpressible delight. As soon as the supper was over, away she hurried, with impatient step, to the humble dwelling of Jemima, gave a low tap at the door, and was admitted, without question or ceremony, and motioned to a chair. Several others were present, but none indulged in conversation. To some, the moment and the scene were of much sublimity; to others, inimitably farcical. A part of those present suppressed a rude giggle as it fell to their turn to be ushered, one by one, into the presence-chamber of the Oracle—while others brushed a trembling tear-drop from their cheeks, as they tottered fearfully to the door. It was Maria's turn at last. All the others had been served, and were gone. On entering the apartment, (which was a three-cornered one,) she encountered the venerable matron, who had risen to meet her. “Daughter of earth,” said the Oracle, “thy hand.” It was given tremblingly, and Maria followed the Seeress to a low stool, (which was by the side of Jemima's own seat,) and sat down. Fifteen minutes in silence, the blood shot eyes of Jemima being riveted upon the fair girl. Then came a suppressed groan, at which Maria involuntarily shuddered. “Daughter,” said the Seeress, “if the ways of the Lord thy God were as our ways, he were cruel to thee.” “Why so, good Mother?” “Hush! I write.” Jemima then took from a glass case a leaf of fine gilt-edged paper, turned her back towards Maria, and, after consulting the green stone in a yellow box that had strange hieroglyphics scratched all over it, she laid hold of a pen made from a raven's quill,



and wrote the following words : "TO LOVE SO YOUNG—A LAMB AND A WOLF—SO YOUNG—A KILLING FROST—DESTITUTION—MARRIAGE—CRIME—THERE IS BLOOD—DEATH."\*

It was doubled, and strongly sealed with wax. Then turning her form and face towards the girl, she thus spake : "Daughter, I have written—but before I give it thee, there is a condition. Thee must promise not to open this until thou hast looked upon the sun of thy eighteenth year. Dost agree to the terms?" "I? No, indeed—I cannot," said Maria, bursting into a laugh, "delay would make me so anxious to know what it contained, that I should die of curiosity, long before the time." "Daughter, thou art a child of destiny—God wills it. It is hard—but there is a heaven hereafter. Agree to the condition, or the flames will devour the record. Promise, child, before thy God." A short pause. Maria faltered ; her cheeks turned to an ashy paleness ; she tried to speak ; her heart leaped up to her throat. "I promise," was all that she could say. "It is thine," said the Seeress, taking a piece of silver from the hand in which she placed the paper. "Daughter, good night." And Maria rose immediately, left the dwelling, and hastened back to the hotel. But she came not as she went. There was a change in her whole nature from that moment. The plastic hand of the Divinity remoulded, as it were, her features. She gazed upon the letter, turned it over and over, with ill-concealed anxiety—and then, in the first involuntary burst of indignation at the conditions, cursed the Seeress and the hour of her own birth.

This was disappointment in most provoking shape. The same night a dream disturbed her slumbers. We will relate it, as nearly as memory serves us, in her own language.

### THE DREAM.

"A spirit came to me during a fearful tempest, and tendered me wings. I accepted them with feelings, if not with words, of gratitude. She flew, and beckoned me to follow. I then flew with her to the brow of a rocky cliff, where we both alighted. Here we were joined by a troop of my companions and kindred, who immediately struck up a chorus which rang through the arch of heaven, and brought back echoes still more musical. Methought I heard the voice of Gabriel mingling those answering sounds. I clapped my hands with an ecstasy of joy. when lo ! all was silent, save the growling tempest beneath. They were gone. I dropped my head and wept. Then a horrible voice accosted me from the cavern below :—'Thou wert my friend ; thou art my enemy—begone !' I reeled in the dread gloom that enveloped me, and uttered a scream for mercy. At that instant the lightning opened to me a fiery path. My wings lifted me up, and again, though now alone, I flew.

"On and on—there was no rest. At length I espied a sunny island, a thousand leagues at sea. I alighted, and walked, and ran, and danced

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\*This mysterious paper is now in the Author's possession. Much curiosity has been manifested to examine it, and the enterprising proprietors of the Boston Museum have recently offered a liberal amount for its purchase. The author returns his grateful acknowledgements for the flattering compliment intended for him in their note, but he is, and ever will be, unwilling that this document, (sacred, no less than singular,) containing, as it does, most wonderfully verified predictions, should be exposed to the vulgar curiosity of the mob.



upon the velvet grass—or methought I was alone at last. Alone, alone! where temptation could not assail me, nor the flatterer's words beguile! Alone before God, and in prayer! But, as I knelt, that awful voice cried out to me again:—‘Thou wert my friend; thou art mine enemy—begone!’ Where was the source of this awful mandate? It came from the earth; it came on the winds. Then my soul drank from the waters of affliction, and despair gnawed at my brain. The voice came again, but with other words—‘To love so young!—a lamb and a wolf—so young!—a killing frost—destitution—marriage crime—there is blood!—death!’ How little I suspected these words (to me so thrilling) were the very same which the Seeress had just interwoven with my eternal destiny! Alone, and yet alone! Oh now for a friend—ONE MORTAL FRIEND—to support and guide me! Truly, none can estimate the value of human sympathy but they who are destitute of its consolations!

“At this instant a youth saluted me, and clasped me in his arms. His smile was sweet, and in his demeanor there was such an appearance of deep affection for me that, in my ecstasy, I did not, could not, resist his embrace. ‘I am thine!—thine forever!’ he whispered, ‘I have known thee from childhood!—I furnished thee with wings!’ As he spoke, Love’s sweet delirium took possession of my soul, and I was conscious only of intense, unearthly delight. After the vividness of this rapture had subsided, we sank into slumber, imparadised in each other’s arms.

“When I awoke, the youth was gone. I thought he would return, and was satisfied. BUT HE CAME NOT. Then the air was filled with hisses. Ten thousand angry serpents could not have uttered a noise so dreadful. I thought my lover’s name was Theodore, and called to him, when, awful presence! a legion of demons rose up at the sound of his name! They were a black, bony, frightful throng, and they greeted me with a terrible shout of exultation. They danced round and round me,





until, from dizziness, I could not see. Then I cursed most bitterly, but they only laughed and hissed. Then the spirit of Murder came into my heart, FOR I KNEW MY SHAME !”

The cold sweat stood on Maria's fair forehead—and this dream, so fraught with terror, (and, as time proved, with reality,) lived in her heart. On awakening at the moment, though in a fright, she believed it to be a visitation of nightmare, and soon slept more quietly.

On the evening of the next day, the company reached Brunswick. Maria arrived at the apartments previously allotted to her, in cheerful spirits, and full of glowing hope. She did not know the feeling of homesickness. Her whole mind was wrapped up in the anticipation of great intellectual advancement. It was Saturday night. Every thing was new and interesting which greeted her eyes. Some of the students, to render her new abode more pleasing at the beginning, serenaded her with very sweet music, beneath her window, at midnight. When the music ceased, she noticed in it a resemblance to that which she had heard in her singular dream at the hotel in the Lucky Basin. As she heard the footsteps of the departing serenaders, she fell into a profound reverie, which was succeeded by a deep, dreamless sleep.

### CHAPTER III.

*Sleigh Rides—An Ardent Son of the South—The Author in the Pulpit—The Flash of First Love, and Love at First Sight—First Love Letters—Note of a Seedy Genius—Virtue with a Slaveholder—Evidence of Maria's Seduction—Her Affecting Appeal to the Seducer—His Indifference and Inhumanity—The Evils of Imprudence stare Maria in the Face—The Spot upon the Soul—Her Promise Violated—The Words from the Crow Quill—She faints away.*

SIX months after the time which brought our last chapter to a close, Maria attended the church of which I was pastor, in Brunswick. It was on a Sabbath morning in midwinter. The snow lay deep on the ground, and the merry bells and the happy faces of that morning of gay sunlight and sparkling frost bespoke the pleasures to be anticipated from many a sleigh-ride. On this occasion Maria was accompanied by a young man who had arrived in the village the week previous, and entered the medical college as a student. He was from Georgia, and his manly bearing, brunette face, jet-black eyes, and curling ringlets, indicated his temperament to be as ardent as a Southern sun could make it. His name was Theodore Maxwell. His father trafficked in human flesh, and bartered virtue for a price ; and the loose improvidence of the son told plainly of there being great wealth in the family. His demeanor indicated that he was on the best terms with himself, and, moreover, that he had a taste for licentious gratifications. He was rich, (no matter by what means,) and that was quite sufficient to place him in full favor with the women, and render him “a good fellow” with the men.



Theodore and Maria entered the church, and seated themselves in a pew on the broad aisle.

I commenced the worship of God by reading the 44th Psalm, the singing of which was followed by an Address to the Throne of Grace. I then read a hymn, which, as well as the psalm, was very well executed by the choir. I then commenced my sermon, from the following text: "Remember Lot's wife." As I proceeded, the utmost of my ability was thrown into the subject. I enlarged upon the development of the affections, the gratitude we owe to the Almighty for a thousand gifts, and the blessed union of two hearts by divine sanction: the nature of the evil thoughts that should be cast away, and the principles which secure to virtue the fruits of a blessed reward: the penalty of disobedience, and the iniquity of the seducer. Few there are, among even the most earnest admirers of the Bible, who truly appreciate its sublimity and poetry. From the first line of Genesis to the last of Revelations, it is filled with evidences of its divine origin. As I reached that point in my discourse which depicted the bereavements of Lot, the cords of whose heart were all severed by a decree of God's wrath, I perceived that Maria and her companion were deeply affected. THEIR EYES MET: IT WAS LOVE!

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There is no genuine love but love at first sight. This is the pure offspring of unpolluted sympathy. All other love is merely the result of observation, reflection, and compromise. The enduring passions flash like the lightning; they scorch the soul, but it is warmed forever! Miserable the creature whose love rises by degrees upon the frigid morning of the mind! Amid the gloom and sorrow of existence, suddenly to behold a form having a kindred soul, and to feel an overwhelming conviction that, with that form, our destiny must be forever entwined; that there is no more joy but in his joy, no sorrow but when he grieves; that in the warmth of his love, in his smile of fondness, is all future bliss—this is love. Magnificent, sublime, divine sentiment! An intense flame burns in the breast of an adoring girl: she is an ethereal being. She is out upon the sea of life, with a gaze fixed to a single star. If that do not shine, there is no further joy in existence!

Oh Indiscretion! Oh Love! In vain are the teachings of moralists, that thou art a delusion! Love, that can illumine the dark hovel and the dismal garret, that can gladden the heart of the slave, and lighten his shackles! The sage may assert that the gratification of vanity is thine aim and end, but Love glances with contempt at the cold-blooded philosophy of calculation.

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## LETTERS.

MARIA TO THEODORE.

*Sunday Night, 11 o'clock.*

Dearest, Dearest Theodore: I have not yet lain down. Did you reach home in safety? That was a swift, ugly horse! I would give worlds to hear from you, Theodore, even one word! What joys hath God revealed to me this day! Can our love endure forever? May



angels guard you, Theodore, and learn you to think of your betrothed Maria! It begins to rain dreadfully, and I know not what to do. I beat about my chamber like a silly bird in a cage. What a destiny broods over us! Write me one line, only one line, to tell me of your welfare. I shall be in despair until I hear from you. Do not delay the bearer an instant. He promises to return in a very, very short time. I will pray for you all this night, that seems as if it would never end. God bless you, my darling Theodore! Do not fail to write, and, till we meet again, believe me your own

MARIA.

*Monday Morning.*

Sweetest, Dearest One: Yours found me quite safe and well, at home, smoking over a glass of wine. I love you, if that could be, more than before. You was a darling, to send to inquire after my safety and health so soon! A wet jacket frightens not me. God bless you, enchanting one! I will pledge your name and welfare in a glass of sparkling liquor—I will, 'pon my suavity.\* Won't that be sublime! I sigh for the regaling drinks of my mother's cupboard! Your penny-wise people here in Maine would grudge a dog his bone, and would starve one of my big Cuba hounds, I am sure. But when we get off there, eh? Won't you shine, a princess? I'll pistol the fool that says you're not one. By my honor, you shall have a hundred servants at your heels, deary, eh? Well, good bye for a short time, love. I love you, and that's gospel truth. I'll be back to-morrow. My soul goes forth after you, as the sunflower follows in the wake of the sun.

Believe me to be your own THEODORE.

Such was the beginning of a correspondence of over a hundred letters, and continuing nearly a year. A careful perusal of all of them, in the order in which they were penned, indicates most clearly the phases of an attachment as fatal to an innocent, unfortunate girl, as it was heartless and betraying on the part of Maxwell. The first impulses of their affections were doubtless mutually sincere. Afterwards the feeling of Theodore changed, or his lust triumphed over the better qualities of his nature. And the truth is not here to be disguised, that the love of a man long immersed in the vices of slavery, and nurtured in slavery's very lap, (as Maxwell had been, from birth,) cannot be reckoned but as the offspring of unmitigated sensuality. The infamy of such a life is seldom surpassed by the atrocities of ocean piracy. A slaveholder cannot appreciate the sublimity and purity of the guardian angel, Virtue. Deadened in feeling by long familiarity with vice, and steeled to all substantial goodness by the inhumanity of the traffic in female

\* Speaking of things suavitous, it strikes us that the following, clipped from a late number of the *Daily Mail*, is something rich in the way of squash luxuriance:

"MR. ROBERT HAMILTON.—To the enterprise, tact, and discretion of this gentleman, the efficient stage-manager of the National Theatre, much of the success of this favorite establishment is to be ascribed. His well-known literary fame, and his merits as an actor, have acquired for him a deserved popularity."

Bear always in mind that the game of a literary quack is to sound the trumpet of his own fame, since no one else will. There is potency in a free ticket, a beef steak, or a gin-sling! Either of these will at any time secure plenty of space in the columns of such an ephemeral, penny concern as the *Mail*. It is not surprising that the corporation which contains the 'immortal part' of Mr. Robert Hamilton should swell with the self-complacency of its tenant! Of a truth, Oh Fame, thy trumpet is of 'sounding brass,' and, though thou makest 'the judicious grieve,' yet, with thine every blast, thou givest fresh occasion for the open-mouthed wonder of 'the groundlings!' When is this self-puffing surfeit to have an end?



loveliness, he desires no higher or purer delight than sensual indulgence. Where earthly prospects are full of promise, the dark demon of lust intrudes, and, strengthened by possession, flaps his wings in exultation that the laws of a *Christian community* are inadequate to prevent the accomplishment of his dark designs. He riots in the possession of numberless victims to his rapacious appetite! Youth, innocence and beauty are immolated, at his bidding, on the altars of licentiousness!

Wo to the fair daughter of the North, whose pure soul is at the mercy of the Southern hyena! Wo to that spirit of slavish reverence for wealth, which winks at any crime, if the criminal be only a man of wealth! In this penurious and licentious age, money is the arch destroyer of female chastity. Wo to the female votaries of Wealth and Fashion, whose feet are in the snares of the soul-destroying seducer! Better to pine in want till the coming of grey hairs, and die unbefriended, than yield thy honor, poor worldling, to the exacting blandishments of wealth!

The letter of young Maxwell, as above given, may be regarded not only as a fair specimen of the literature of slavery, but likewise as an ebullition of that chivalric spirit which is the peculiar boast of the Southron. Love, pistols, seduction, murder, dogs, horses, alligators, and improvident indolence, are the ingredients of Southern chivalry. All the letters of Theodore to Maria, now in our possession, abound in the same swaggering emptiness. Many of them are filled with the grossest obscenity. It would be foreign to our purpose to insert them here; our history is sufficiently blackened with human frailty, without them.

But we cannot well refrain from presenting the reader with one more of Maria's letters, evidently written under the withering influence of disappointment and shame. Still the repulsive brutality of Maxwell could not stifle the flame of FIRST LOVE, that burned within her confiding, forgiving, repentant heart. To his iron scoffs she returned tears, tenderness, and supplications.

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ne, Wednesday Evening.

Beloved Theodore: Shall we ever again meet? Shall I indeed ever again listen to that sweet voice—that voice which sometimes bears such unkind words—and will it tell me again that it loves me, with the self-same accents that ever ring in my fascinated ear? But oh, Theodore, speak unkindly no more—no more neglect. I feel that there is a stain upon my soul which all the waters of Jordan could not cleanse. But, Theodore, you swore your fidelity in the face of Heaven. If you continue your neglect, I shall die.

Oh, this love is a fever—a fever which has no antidote but death for me! Could I but blot that fatal night from the scroll of time, my bliss would never end. Why did the moon look down so palely, and the gold stars laugh? You bathed my temples in the pearly dew, and spoke so kindly—Oh, were you false even then? And I your victim!

Avaunt! avaunt! thou horrid dream! Begone! He is still true—my soul's light—my Theodore! But seldom he comes, or writes to me, of late. Dearest love, I thought to meet you yesterday, at your boarding-house. I called with Miss R. But you were gone, and (would you think it?) your landlady tossed her head slyly, and said:



"Perhaps he went out of town to some grave-yard, last night!" Horrible! How ugly in her to say that! I heeded not her base insinuation.

Would you suppose it? I went into your bedroom. I contrived to get there unobserved. I was there but a moment—a precious moment. Don't think it wrong, don't scold me, dear—but I kissed your pillow, and left a tear-drop on it. I could not help it, dearest, when I reflected that your darling head had rested there so often and so lately. Oh, that I were now at your side! Every thing is so desolate without you—every thing so harrows up the past! Oh that I could forget the past! But I will not be miserable. I will be grateful to Heaven that I have been loved by you.

Theodore! do not let your brow be clouded when you read this. Smile, smile! as when you first greeted me, a stranger! God knows how much devotion I lavished upon you for that kindness. Shall it now curse me? Pray write to me. There is no misery so long as we love; but in the flickering light of hope I see darkly.

To-day I have looked over all your letters. Some I pressed to my bosom as priceless treasures; others dropped from my fingers like lead. Oh my heart! Theodore, you are changeable. I am an unprotected, unbefriended girl. I have reposed all in you. Your love is the only sunlight that can illumine this life. Hot tears gush from my eyes, but that's no matter. God bless you, Theodore! All will yet go well, will it not? It cannot be that you despise me, as the tongue of envy interprets your indifference. If you do, I can endure this life no longer. Write, write! or visit, this evening, your betrothed but unhappy

MARIA.

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This letter, like a dozen others which had preceded it, produced no response of any description. About ten days afterwards, towards evening, there was a tap at the door of the house where Maria then was, alone. It was Maxwell. She fell into his arms, and fainted. He had, on that day, been apprised, through a tobacco warehouse in Boston, that his father desired his speedy return to Georgia. He had now come to say farewell—and a long and last farewell he meant it should be. When she regained composure, and wiped the tears from her cheek, she pressed to his forehead a kiss. Then he spoke: "Maria, I am summoned home. To-morrow I go. I am here to bid you farewell. I have long avoided you; now you will trouble me no more. It's strange that you hang about me so." "Hush!" interrupted Maria, in a low tone; "speak not, but go." The blood of pride suffused her face; she saw the fruits of her fidelity trampled in the dust, in these words of Maxwell—her devotedness the mark of his derision. He had now come to announce his abandonment. As this thought broke in upon her brain, she gazed at him with the intenseness of despair.—Maxwell burst into a laugh. "Why, ma chere amie," said he, "such undauntedness of spirit as that would put two thousand dollars upon your head, at a slave market. Suppose you go to Georgia, and let my father advertise you for sale. Many slave-girls are as white as you are. Then you would be provided for: all your wants supplied. Per-



haps some covey would make you his bed-favorite, with the full freedom of his plantation."\*

Not a word or emotion escaped Maria during the utterance of this jargon of slavery. Maxwell rose unbidden, and left the dwelling. When he was out of sight, Maria gave utterance to a wild despair. From that moment her nature again put on strange garments, and underwent another change. A new lustre beamed in her eyes. It was the embodiment of an unsleeping revenge. She saw her own wreck: and now that all was engulfed within that avalanche of death, *disgrace*, she summoned to her aid the powers of a long-slumbering fortitude—the fortitude of an injured woman, and formed a stern resolve.

"I am lost. All is over. A thousand demons are hissing at me. I shrink from the faces of my friends. This night I, too, will leave thee, beautiful village, scene of my destruction! Henceforth my life shall be dedicated to the society of strangers. Bravely will I play my part. I will smile when I curse. I will win to destroy."

Scarcely were these incoherent sentences finished, before Maria recalled to her mind the old Seeress at the Lucky Basin—the letter of fate, and her own solemn promise not to break its seal before the arrival of her eighteenth birth-day. "Two long years yet," said she, musingly; "I may cease to breathe before that time; all is blighted even now. I will heed my pledge no longer." Immediately she started for her portfolio, up stairs, in which it lay. She seized and broke it open in an instant: "*To love so young; a Lamb and a Wolf; so young; A Killing Frost; Destitution; Marriage; Crime; there is Blood! Death!*" One shriek announced that the forbidden contents were known. Maria lay senseless upon the floor!

#### CHAPTER IV.

*The Bay of Portland—Departure for Boston—First Impression of the Ocean—The Snares of a Passage—Arrival at Boston—First Impressions of it—The Journey of a Cab—An Omen of Evil—A House of Ill-Fame—The Heartlessness of Men—A Word on Destiny.*

In the beautiful bay of Portland, at night—the last night of June, eighteen hundred and thirty-nine—a noble steamer swung at her moorings, pawing the water most impatiently, and spouting smoke and steam from her great nostrils. There was confusion, such as was never known before the days of invention; carriages turning over; people of all classes and ages, on shore and on board, hurrying to and fro. When bedlam was in its zenith—legs breaking, oaths in plenty—the bell rung out the chime of the inferno, and away she went.

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\* It is no unusual thing at the South to see the son of a slaveholder going to a slave-auction, for the purpose of buying a beautiful and accomplished female, (whom slavery condemns to the shambles of vice,) to be appropriated to his sensual gratification. Many of these young men are not more than sixteen years old when their parents allow them to begin these hellish practices. Nay, more than this: Young men often go into the cotton and rice fields, in the open day, and commit acts of the most revolting libertinism on the helpless girls, who are compelled to labor fifteen hours a day, under the rays of a Southern sun. One of the "noblest mothers of Virginia," in 1844, purchased three attractive mulatto females, and placed them in a cottage near the family mansion, for the exclusive use of an only son—assigning as a reason why she did it, that it would "make Charley steady!" Is there a God in heaven?



Out on the sounding sea and in a thronging multitude—the salt spray anon dashing furiously up against the gunwale of the vessel—there moved a stately female figure, seemingly alone. It was the ill-fated subject of these memoirs. Her countenance wore an expression of resoluteness seldom to be seen on the features of woman. Her feet had never trod the deck of a steamboat before, and now, for the first time, her eyes feasted on the sight of ocean. Listlessly, and as if enwrapped in spirituality, she gazed on the surging waves. They were crested by the silvery moonlight, each frolicksomenely chasing the other, and collectively presenting the appearance of a steel-clad host rushing into battle. Maria was filled with the deepest awe. Words were utterly inadequate to express her emotion. This was that mighty, boundless, fathomless ocean of which she had heard and dreamed so much. It kissed Arabian sands, and sighed its lullaby to a thousand islands, and roared in terror, and lashed the icebergs around the pole! Often and often, in earlier years, had her fancy covered its surface with armed genii in their tiny skins, and with birds of sparkling plumage; a thousand hymning echoes from a thousand sources enchanted the ear. Now all things were trooping fantastically; now they vanished in a twinkling. Peris weaving hair and song and coral; old Neptune careering in the plenitude of power; great serpents snapping their tails: whales swallowing and vomiting Jonahs; these, and many more, were the themes of legend and story which thrilled her nature with wonder and delight! Oh, not as then did her soul now drink from the fountains of pleasing, alluring anticipation and fairy nonsense! Pennyless, forsaken, friendless, in the undulating world; an ardent and a confiding heart already scorched by the living embers of despair, Maria had a part to play in the unknown future, which the genius of a conqueror could not execute or comprehend. A man is brave and bold because he is armed and strong; but where is the man who can or ever did surmount the difficulties and trials which beset the pathway of an unprotected female, whose bark is launched on the precarious tide of a sensual, selfish, scoffing, devilish world? Not all the heroes of all the Greeks and Romans subdued a foe so terrible, as mankind to woman! I have said she was pennyless. When the steward of the boat dinged his bell, giving notice for “all who had not paid their passage to walk up and settle,” she sent word to the Captain requesting an interview. Shortly he came, when, in a most affecting manner, she expressed her inability to pay her fare, and implored his generosity to allow her to pass without charge. He assented, conducted her to a state room, and told her to take courage and sleep without sadness. Generous man! thought she, some of nature’s noblemen are yet living; and with gratitude and prayer she undressed and went to bed. Sleep soon came to her eyelids, for she was weary. But scarcely had sleep veiled the memory, before a portly, well dressed man, stealthily entered the room without a light, took off his clothes and crawled into the same bed! She waked not until his arms were firmly clasped around her form. Then she uttered a scream, but amid the tremendous noise of the boat’s machinery and the dash of the waters, that cry was drowned. She struggled furiously to get away from his grasp, but failed. Then he put his lips to her ear and whispered, “A free passage; you are without money, and I have an abundance; be quiet, and all shall go well with you.” Her brain was confused; her mouth was dum. She felt



that her hour had come. He accomplished his purpose, and remained with her through that long, bewildering night.\*

Gaily broke the morning, and with its coming the boat landed at Foster's wharf, in Boston. Maria had already risen. She went out, and up the stairway to the promenade deck, to look at Boston. The world seemed new to her. It was not that abode of honor, nor of love, nor of joy, which the years of her fancy had painted it. Boston! to her, a great and wonderful city. How much she had heard of Boston. It was before her, but she did not dream about it now as she had done so many, many times before, when her imagination played upon its hundred spires or traced it through and through. Her eye now drank the great reality, and the confused roar which she heard, and the still greater confusion of human beings and animal, which she saw, with the uneven, smutty-looking buildings, and the narrow avenues which threaded its pulsating heart, made her tremble. Oh! for a friend or a beggar to guide her footsteps. While in this state of uncertainty, a cab driver approached her, and very politely inquired if she wished to be taken to any part of the city? His pleasant and obliging demeanor gave her encouragement, and she frankly explained to him that she was here a stranger; that she must find a boarding house and secure a frugal sustenance by labor. At this he smiled and said "Certainly, step into my cab, and I will find you a good place without difficulty." She assented; and the cab driver, sure of his prize, drove rapidly from the wharf, as a low and heartless laugh burst from the throats of a gang of starched loafers standing near, who knew both the purposes of the driver and the circumstances of the previous night.

Through winding streets and cross lanes, by sudden turns and jumbles, they drifted along. Now, cabby was in Washington street, amid a sea of trucks and horses, huge omnibusses and small fry, groping as in the dark; now he dashed through another street, on the west side of which spread out, like a moss carpet, the Common; the broad, the beautiful, the world-famed Boston Common. Then a turn was made, and Maria thought that they were going back to the very wharf they had left. But he soon bore off to the right, over by a large brick edifice, standing on an eminence and commanding one of the loveliest prospects which creation affords. As she saw it, through a pane in the cab door, she almost forgot her destitute situation and her sorrows. Passing this,

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\*Few are aware of the extent of prostitution carried on, on board the Eastern steamboats. Here the libertines of Boston flourish. State-rooms are provided and free passages given to all young females who desire to visit their homes and return, or who, being in the country, are going to the city for employment. It is true they are poor. In the lime and basswood districts of Maine, perhaps they never had a dollar in their "born days." And the people down there are such a simple and uninitiated race, that these daughters of chastity have never had the least knowledge of this steamboat deviltry, or of earning money by the sale of their virtue, until it is whispered to them when it is too late to make escape. It is supposed that not less than five thousand poor girls are entrapped and ruined every year by this licentious game. Under such circumstances, reaching Boston for the first time, it is not surprising that so large a part of them are prevailed upon to enter houses of ill-fame, impressed with the delusive idea that they will soon make a fortune and return. Thus they unconsciously sign their own death-warrants—aye, passports to a doom far less preferable!

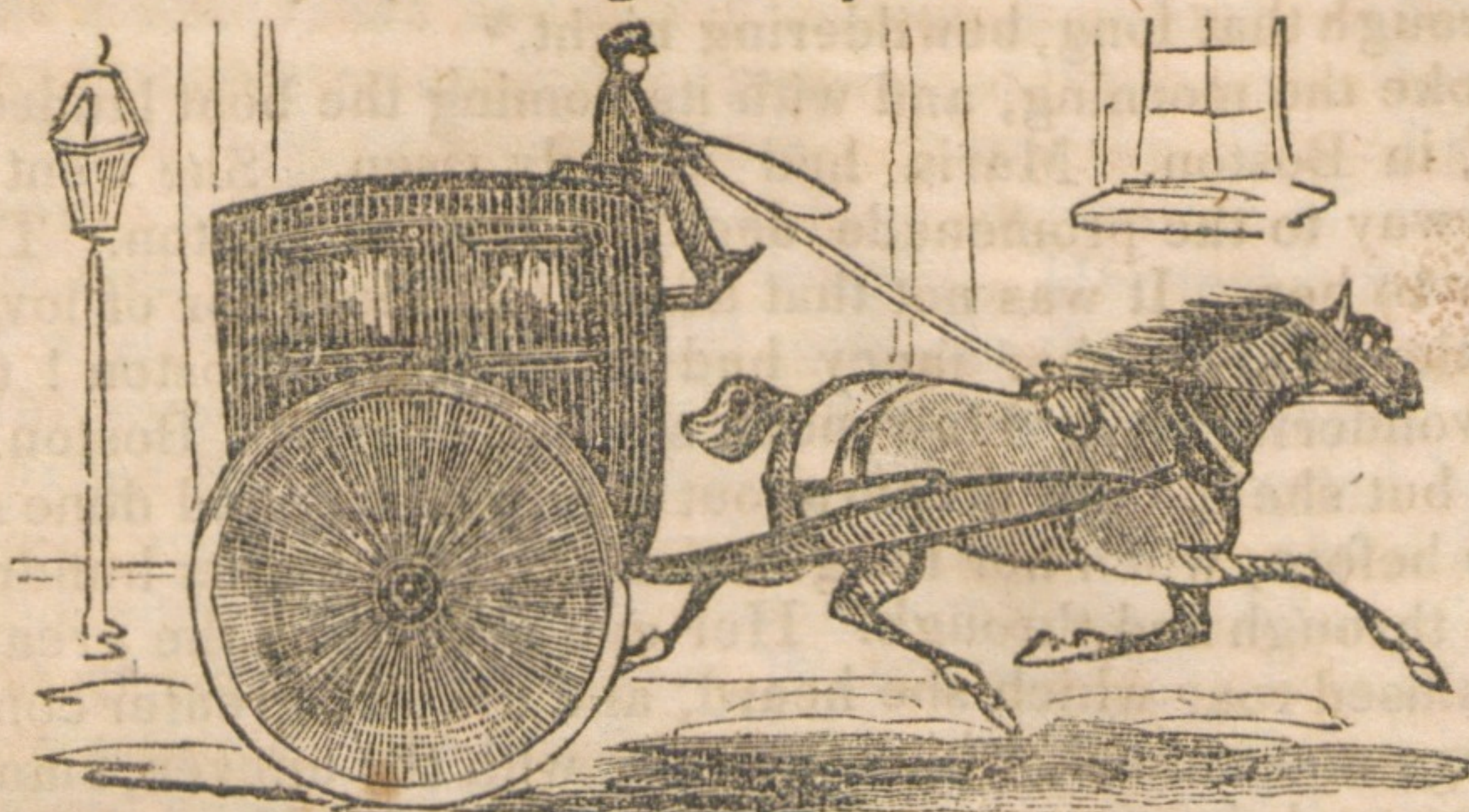
The cab nuisance is a most efficient auxiliary to this work of hell. Nearly all of them are in the employ of the keepers of houses of prostitution; they hang around the landings, and get their cue from the knowing ones. Is there a girl who is entirely a stranger, and is seeking for a residence in the city, a cabman is always at hand, in the guise of one who earns an honest livelihood. She steps into his rickety vehicle, and is jotted down at the door of a temple of vice.

These poor creatures, once steeped in infamy, are generally beyond the reach of reformation. They remain in Boston while their beauty and bloom is attractive; but soon, as a matter of course, they contract odious and incurable diseases. Thus afflicted, large numbers of them migrate to New Bedford, Nantucket and Cape Cod, where, after a riotous debauch of a few years with the whalemén, they die. The enormous dividends declared by the New Bedford Branch Railroad Co. are mainly attributable to this class of passengers.

Oh, civilization! thou bringst gold to the rich man's purse, and art the sweet nursling of murder.



they descended a hill, and at length cabby halted before a house in Low-



ell street. It was a house of ill-fame. The character of its inmates were of course unknown to her; her heart was even gladdened by the light of a bevy of gay faces at the window. As she alighted on the pavement, a raven, so unusual in that place, darted by so close to her that its pinions brushed the ribbons of her bonnet. She entered the house and was familiarly but respectfully welcomed, saying all the while in her bosom, "Thank God, it is well at last."

Oh, conjurings of innocence, thy web is woven with threads of chalk—the morality and uprightness of this world! The wolf howls at thy philosophy and is hungering! Dream not of the world's honor, nor seek disinterestedness among men; for thou wilt not find it. Harken no more to the seductive accents of friendship; they flow from polluted lips; in them the devil chants thy requiem. Hate and curse and shun the Race; in that and that only is there protection and safety.

The seraglio of vice into which Maria had thus been cast, was daily and nightly visited by men of all grades. Came there the banker in silk stockings; the improvident sailor, just from the wave; the artisan, with the pittance of toil; the sucker-sharp, whose swindlings and lies are the wages of prostitution; the students of Harvard; the silver-haired deacon of the church of God; yea, EVEN THE PREACHER, RIGHT FROM HIS PULPIT, FLUSHED WITH WINE AND LUST!\* Came there the men of the South, ardent as a southern sun could make them: reckless men, who dashed about the country, lavishing the coffers wrung from the blood of slavery. And they not only, but likewise the pomatum beetles and butterflies of Europe, the spawn of an imbecile aristocracy, who are the scavengers of death and hell in every age and clime.

Days, days, days! Whether of pleasure or of pain, how noiselessly they steal away, and leap from the juttings of Time. Say what you will: let theologians crack their skulls in harrowing up proofs to the contrary: we are the creatures of circumstance. Take the fair maiden, in the bloom of a life of promise; how long ere the mirror will proclaim to

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\*This is fearfully true. Many of the illustrious names of the pulpit are linked with the most damning vices. We need but cite from a host of examples on record, those of Onderdonk, Johnson, Kimball, Avery, Hoyt, Mason, Kendrick—to say nothing of the reverend libertines at this time, who are yet sheltered by the wings of the faithful and stalk abroad in the face of day, as the representatives and advocates of the meek and lowly Saviour! Not a hundred days previous to her death Maria Bickford was the bed-mate of a ranting Millerite preacher of Boston!



her the coming of that signet of waning years, the first grey hair? And upon each of us there is written a destiny---a fate. We may put forth our human might and throw up barriers against the tide, it availeth not; we are swept into the lap of that destiny at last.

## CHAPTER V.

*Good out of Evil---Maria before the Police Court---The Works of a Philanthropist---An Unfortunate Sickness---The Amorous Physician---Return to her Native Home---Her Marriage and the Effects of it---Despair and Desperation---Her Victims---Her Awful Murder---Reflections on Fate and Death.*

About four months after the occurrences which we have just narrated, in mid-winter, a young woman sat in the garret of a wooden dwelling at the corner of Harrison avenue and Kneeland street, in the southerly portion of the city of Boston, industriously plying the needle by a small but cheerful fire. It was Maria Bickford, certainly in a much better and more encouraging situation than while sojourning at that abode of iniquity in Lowell street. Her face was worn but not melancholy, and her bosom heaved a sigh and her voice trembled, while she sung the song of "Home, sweet home." There had been a change in her condition---good had come to her out of evil. The truth of the matter was, that the authorities, being at length informed as to the character of the establishment in Lowell street, made an onset upon it at midnight, captured the inmates, male and female, in their beds, and carried them to Leveret street jail. The next morning, while before the Police Court awaiting sentence---the piece of her degradation---she was accosted by a celebrated philanthropist, who desired to speak with her. He told her that it was probable she would be sent to the House of Correction, if no intercession were made to the judge in her behalf; that if she would from that day make a resolution to change her conduct, he would try to procure her discharge, by the payment of a fine. She heard him doubtfully, yet imploringly; for her confidence in any thing like unselfishness in man was small indeed. Through a profusion of tears, which a crowd of idling by-standers ridiculed as harlot's crocodiles, she thanked him, and gave a promise that if he helped her in that moment of freezing horror, her life should be placed at his disposal. He did effect her release by the payment of ten dollars; led her into the street and told her that she was free; and then began to urge upon her mind, in an earnest and affecting manner, the importance and the glory of reformation. He pointed out the manner by which a respectable livelihood might easily be obtained, if she would but adhere to a resolution never again to fall into the arms of vice.\* Maria's heart leaped with gratitude, and she could not

\*It would be culpable in us to allow this opportunity to pass without paying a feeble, but most hearty tribute of respect to Mr John Augustus of Boston, for his unwearying labors in the cause of reformation. Such disinterestedness, attended by such an overflow of blessed results, can only be appreciated by the unfortunates themselves. Philanthropy of so pure a cast is among the rarest of the emblems of human greatness; and the memory of this good man will long live in the free gratitude of many a broken heart. Mr. Augustus, more truly than any other man in America, may be likened unto that greater and crucified philanthropist of the olden time, who gloried in the work of "going about and doing good." May his days be as many as his usefulness is great. Heaven rejoiceth over his works.



give utterance to her feelings in the lameness of language. She pressed his hand and watched his benevolent countenance, and took courage from his unostentatious demeanor. Although betrayed most piteously thus far in life, by every man she had known as an acquaintance, still a conviction dwelt in her nature that there were yet men on earth who were truthful and virtuous in the sight of heaven. Sunlight to thy soul, poor thing! you were right. Following the suggestions of this humane individual, Maria applied for work at the counter of an extensive tailoring establishment in Washington street. It was readily obtained. By this she could earn, and was earning, a livelihood. Solitude was now her society, and her voice of song oozed through the shingles of the roof, and without was heard by the passer by. In her hours of recreation, her mind was occupied by literary pursuits. The epistle "to a friend," as given below, was written by her, and is one of the very best pieces of composition our eyes ever met with. It was forwarded by her to the Editor of the Boston "Olive Branch," who published it with glowing commendations, and it afterwards went the rounds of the newspaper press throughout this country and Europe.

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#### TO A REFORMED FEMALE FRIEND.

Life has its hours of sentiment and romance, which Time, with his envious wing, can never darken or obliterate. Such bright and pleasant hours *we* have had, never to be forgotten—such happy moments, in the friendly intercourse of thought and feeling we have enjoyed. We have wandered in the gardens of Fancy and Hope, and gathered the may-flowers of the spirit—the fadeless roses of the heart. We have had seasons of intimate converse of pure enjoyment, such as lend to life a halcyon wing of rainbow hue, as it glides on, with swift pinion, to its infinite home.

There is a celestial calm—an elevated joy, in the trance of mind; it is a pure and quiet sense of nobler being. There is a sweet serenity—a bliss divine, in the simple and noiseless expressions of virtuous esteem and friendship. And have we not had such serenities and joys, consecrated on the memory and the heart? Ah, who would lose the remembrance of pleasures past—the light of by-gone days, when the confidence of friendship, and the hope of its perpetuity—when the festivals of intellect and the delights of sympathy were truly ours, such as raise and illumine a strengthening attachment, with the fond endearments and bright emotions of undecitful and happy spirits?

The fair and gentle hand of nature has spread her beauties and her wealth around our pathway, wherewith to make us rich and blest; and if we welcome not her lavish kindness and constant care, some sordid sentiment must blind our minds, or guilty stain defile our hearts. In the dim, hushed hour of twilight, I have sat by my window, and looked, in quiet thought, at the pensile boughs of the willow tree, waving gently their leaves of sadness, and found more of rapture, undimmed by earth, than earth's brightest honors could bestow. I have wandered over the silent graves of changed humanity, and, wrapped in lonely musings on the sleeping dust of the departed, and on the distant home of immortal being, I have felt more true and tranquil joy than the gathered wealth of the world could ever afford.



To the eye of reason, raised and enlightened by truth, how little, comparatively, is there of what is great and good in the restless pursuit of unenjoyed opulence and honor, or in the transient distinctions of rank and power. Is not the mind, with its electric thought, and the heart, with its sublime emotions---the one darting through the elevated regions of philosophy, the other meandering through the beauteous paradise of poesy---the lasting and essential worth of man---the lofty majesty of merit---the eternal divinity within him? Is not his free and deathless spirit---from heaven descended---over earth outspreading---extending through all time---collecting the treasures of all realms---and, like a vestal fire that struggles to go up to its smiling source, aspiring ever to ascend to that blest home of truth and goodness, "the bosom of its Father and its God"---the pride of his distinction---the grandeur of his glory?

The spirit, if pure, finds friends in all things above and around it. It gazes upon the deep blue of heaven, and its calm; upon the high careering sun, and exults; upon the light floating cloud, and smiles in peace; upon the storm-rolling chariot, and trembles with awe. It looks forth upon the high mountain-tops in their solitary grandeur, and upon the stately forests in their dark sublimity, and forgets earth, with its mutability, littleness and folly. It looks upon the rich waving fields and green meadow lands---upon the quiet lake and the rushing stream---and this world's darkness, and noise, and strife, fade from its remembrance. It beholds with a smile the circles of beauty and intelligence---the connexions of dignity and grace---the dwellings of purity and love---and the disappointments and sorrows of time vanish for awhile away. Yea, more---it turns its full and eagle eye upon the boundless ocean---that image of benignity and sovereignty, where Omnipotence rides alone on the whirlwind's wing and directs the dashing storm, or where he sits enthroned in all the bright tranquility of peace and hope---and feels itself in nature far, far superior to the vanities and vexations of its temporal existence, and yearns, with a quenchless energy, for the revelations and felicities of an infinite hereafter.

But this contemplation of things material and inanimate still leaves a void behind; the heart is unsatiated and unconsolated. We turn to higher objects---to the kindred thoughts and feelings of cultivated men, and study, with a gushing sympathy, the records of their intellectual being. We behold them bursting the chains around them, bounding over the impediments in their path, scorning back to earth its native earthliness, and then unfold freely their golden wings and float away, far above the humiliation, and cares, and murkiness of this transient sphere, and move onward in imagination through the multiplying ages of immortal activity.

But the written records of departed genius cannot enliven and cheer like the eloquent lip and expressive eye of living friendship. Hence we turn to beings of breathing interest, and sentiment, and emotion around us, with the fond hope to find some kindred spirits that can commune with our own; and if, indeed, we meet with such, our mind kindles and our heart rebounds with all the warm and generous simplicity, eagerness and delight of childhood's years. And then we truly think life has not an object nor a charm without their constant and congenial companionship. We feel, without their society, converse and sympathy, the sky has no beauty, the earth no loveliness, the flow of waters no melody, the words of the mighty in intellect and the strong in passion no power



to subdue the soul to tenderness, or raise it to triumph. We long then anxiously to lean on some friendly arm—to feel the beating of some friendly heart. We deeply yearn to look upon some tone of love. We desire intensely to associate with some being of a similar intellectual mould, whose characteristic sentiments and tastes accord harmoniously with those of our own breast.

A few brief months have passed away since two beings met, of thoughts and feelings flowing in unison; one of lofty intellect, dignity and sweetness combined—the other what nature, education, and experience unitedly have formed her. They have conversed on themes of varied interest, opened to each other the temple of the soul, and been mutually happy. And must they yield to the high decree of fate, and part for life? Must the silver chords be severed and the golden bowl be broken that were binding each to other with the strength of affection and the rich fullness of hope? If so, let Heaven's best will be done. But let this be a token, simple and valueless indeed, that thou hast been a friend, most sincerely esteemed and generously accredited by her who has addressed thee these hurried lines. Let this be a trifling memento of the few happy hours that have shone out brightly upon the silent obscurity of her path, and illumined the page of the past with the hallowed light of thy own pure and radiant spirit. May Heaven's kindest love, and fairest smiles, and largest blessings, be the friend's whose name and image will ever be devotedly cherished and sacredly honored in the blighted heart of

M. A. D.

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Those who believe in a special providence will stagger to learn that this pleasing picture was soon clouded; that these fair prospects were soon blighted, by the visitation of a dreadful sickness, which brought her to a state of helplessness even more forlorn than any condition she had before undergone. Alone in a sick chamber, emaciated by a long course of fever, with no parent or friend to give solace, or answer her demands! Day succeeded day, and with them came wintry blast and gnawing poverty. The only assistance she received was from the hands of her physician, who, though a man of the world, possessed some kindness of heart. He came each morning and evening, wrote prescriptions for medicines, which she had scarcely the means to purchase from the druggist—placed fuel in the grate, and went away. But she was not then or there to die. Her disease at length made a favorable turn, and, after a few weeks of steady recovery, the rosy flush of health came into her face.

The doctor, however, did not discontinue his visits, and he was welcomed, for Maria's grateful heart could not but feel that her life had been preserved by his skill and kindness. He was a bachelor, and his deep-set eyes and piercing glance told that he was a man of lust. She had observed this, and was not, therefore, at all surprised when he began to manifest a sensual familiarity with her person, making promises of munificence, and inquiring into the nature of her wants. During that winter there was great depression in the monetary affairs of the country, and consequently a diminished supply of labor for the poor. Such as could be obtained was at prices so much reduced, that many honest people were compelled to steal for a part of their livelihood! Maria was destitute indeed. For her, no work was to be had at any rate, before the



coming of spring.\* At this rate she could not subsist through the winter. It was disgraceful to beg—inhumanity would spurn her from every door! Go, ask the wolf for charity, but not a civilized people!

But why prolong the truth? Maria again yielded to Necessity and to Fate. That physician, with guile upon his lips, seduced her from Virtue's sanctuary, and there was revelry in the haunts of vice.† Their sinful intercourse continued until both winter and spring had passed, when, provided with an ample amount of money, she returned, gaily dressed and accomplished in manners, to her native home.

We need not further minutely relate the remaining acts of her life. It is known that, on the occasion of this visit to her grief-stricken mother, chance made her acquainted with an honest and worthy man, who became enamoured of her charms, and that this attachment soon resulted in their marriage. This person was Mr. Bickford. He followed the trade of a bootmaker, and was much respected by those who knew him. They lived together upwards of two years, (though unhappily,) when she deserted her husband and returned to Boston. The following paper, penned by her own hand, will convey to the reader some idea of the state of her mind soon after her marriage :

#### A SHORT DIARY AFTER MY MARRIAGE.

*August 10th.* I have been married just ten days. During that short period, many circumstances have occurred, much tending to dispel the illusive hopes so long and so lately cherished in my imagination and fervent feelings. My husband is possessed of many rare qualities of mind and heart, and he loves me with excessive earnestness. But I have now discovered, what I could not, through infatuation, before marriage—that those passions of his nature which won my admiration are barbed with opposite extremes. At one time he loads me with caresses ; at another reviles with unbecoming satire. My petulant disposition impels a retort, and hence frequent altercations. In moments of calmness I explain to him how oppressive and deplorable are these recurrences. He relents with an apology, and then calmly and sweetly do we reason

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\*Mr. Terson Paulin, of Paris, gives these lines in a petition to the Chamber of Deputies for the amelioration of the destitute classes of France : “ We do not speak of *girls* placed in the same alternative; that which we *might* say, would be too painful to read. We will only remark, that it is at the period of long intermissions of work that the missionaries of prostitution recruit their proselytes from among the fairest of daughters of the people

†The influence of physicians over the persons of their female patients is not less remarkable than true. This is very well, when trust is placed in such as are truly virtuous and honorable ; but when otherwise, beware of a dangerous villain. It is almost a physiological impossibility for a young woman (however virtuously disposed) to resist the improper familiarities of an unprincipled physician. She may, indeed, hesitate and wonder at first, but the glisters and squills which he will administer, as indispensably necessary for the preservation of health, are charged with those drugs which excite the animal passions to an uncontrollable degree, and in this state they are a sure prey to the rapacious maw of a medical buzzard. This peace-destroying practice is carried on to an extent which almost baffles credulity. Our wives and daughters cannot be too often or too earnestly warned against employing any physician who is not known to possess the highest moral rectitude. Very old physicians should certainly be preferred ; and those young bucks whose diploma is a distended pair of nostrils, should as certainly be avoided. Especially would we particularize, as one of the latter class, a pedantic simpleton, with a Scotch name, at the West End, in Boston ! Shun that fellow as you would a pestilence !

To our New York readers we would instance a long-shanked, black-haired whiskerando, who hails (or did, in 1844,) from a respectable boarding-house on Lispenard street, in that city. He sports an “ M. D.” and a cane, is as silly a mountebank as you will meet in many a summer's day. His “ importance” and gasconade are insufferable, and his character is a blight to all that is decent or endearing.



together. Late affectionate attachments are renewed, and a Divine Presence witnesseth the communion of our hearts.

There are several considerations which render our marriage untimely and unwise.

First. Our mutual acquaintance was too short. We did not at all canvass each other's faults ; we rather strove to conceal and veil our eyes before them,—too frequent and important mistakes of love-trapped young people.

Secondly. Our religious predilections are much too dissimilar—he being strictly Calvinistic, a religion to which I am sternly opposed. The mild precepts of our beloved Saviour, and the sacred vows of the altar, are thus desecrated by contention—a double curse.

Thirdly. We are much too poor.

This last consideration is most unfortunately omitted in the anticipatory summing-up of the chances and consequences of married life, by those whose misfortune it is to be poor like ourselves. Reflect upon it as you may, and palliate as you please, poverty marriages are in themselves an evil and a disgrace. In a favored land like this, no industrious single man (unless peculiarly unfortunate) has a right to be pennyless at the age of twenty-five ; and such as are imprudent, as well as those who wrap the golden hours of manhood in a napkin, should, by special enactment of law, be not only debarred from the enjoyments of matrimony, but also shamed from the presence of worthy people. As love-fevers are managed in these days, the habiliments of the altar are too often the sport of an illusion, as fatal in its effects as ill-timed in concert. Marriage, under proper regulations, is indeed a boon and a blessing ; but when made to minister to the forlorn hopes of the inconsiderate, the poverty-bound, or the helpless, it is a curse of the deepest die. It has darkened the face of creation as a simoon from time immemorial, encompassing the wretchedness of millions, who, had they timely resolved, first to better their conditions, then to marry, might have been independent and happy all their lives.

*August 20th.* Ten more days have passed—so many saw-teeth. It is painful to trace the pale appearances which have assumed the place of the rose-tint upon my husband's cheek. Returning from his daily toils, I find him stubborn in manner and bitter in words. All my efforts to humble his towering will have failed. So, between poverty, contention, and disappointment, our pathway to the future is unflowered.

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When she had concluded to remove to Boston, there to reside permanently, a new tide rushed in upon her destiny. SHE WAS LOST. The fountain of her tears was dry. Despair laid its iron fingers upon the strings of her heart. And now began that career of madness and crime which rendered her name a signal of terror to the licentious, who thronged the dens of prostitution. She laughed and was happy in her revengeful determination.—Revenge ! at whose shrine of blood she did reverence !

“And where her frown of hatred darkly fell,  
Hope withering fled, and mercy sighed farewell.”

For a period of over four years, she led the van in the battle of Extermination to Man, the plunderer of her life's joys, her innocence—Man, the rock of her ruin ! She saw but to conquer. The devotees of



pomatum swarmed about her, lavishing sickening adulations upon her charms. She inwardly mocked at their hollowness, and Murder whetted its beak upon their lies. Twice were her hands imbrued in the blood of her paramours; and, had her existence been prolonged a few more days, it is highly probable that a printer, of a name similar to that borne by the object of her first love, would have fallen a victim to her avenging steel.

But the hour came when the mighty King of Terrors summoned her soul into the presence of that forgiving Jesus who wrote upon the sand, at the harlot's feet—" *Let him among you that is without sin cast the first stone!*" By a murderer's hand she fell, as had others by her own. And then there was heard a noise in the air without, such as had never before greeted human ears. Whence it came, none could tell.

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Dark and inexplicable Fate! weaver of wild contrasts, demon of this hoary world, that movest through it as a spirit moveth over the waters, filling the depths of things with a solemn mystery, and an everlasting change! Thou sweepest over our graves, and Joy is born from the ashes: thou sweepest over Joy, and lo, it is a grave! Engine and tool of the Almighty, whose years cannot fade! thou changest the earth as a garment, and as a vesture it is changed: thou makest it one vast sepulchre and womb united, swallowing and creating life, and reproducing over and over, from age to age—from creation to the creation's doom—the same dust and ashes which stalked under the names of the countless millions who danced to the discordant music of life, and gave up the ghost!

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## CHAPTER VI.

### *The Person and Character of Albert J. Tirrell.*

Early on the morning of the awful tragedy which filled the whole country with amazement and dread, and before the newspapers blazed with its horrible details, there was great excitement in the horse-stables and the gambling-shops of Boston. The sucker-sharps, who always, in every part of the world, keep up a telegraphic communication with the frail sisterhood, were on this occasion elated with an event which so absorbed their inquisitive cunning, that they forgot, for a few hours, the game of filching green-horns. Spagnoletto, with all the power of his pencil, would fail in a delineation of those groups of human cormorants, as they surfeited their murderous appetites upon the fresh intelligence. They were jolly-serious—upsetting chairs, swallowing brandy, breaking glasses, and uttering fearful oaths. In one place a sucker preached a tirade to the riotous auditory, himself standing on a large Bible. A murder, of unexampled atrocity, had just been committed by one of the most notorious of their gang.



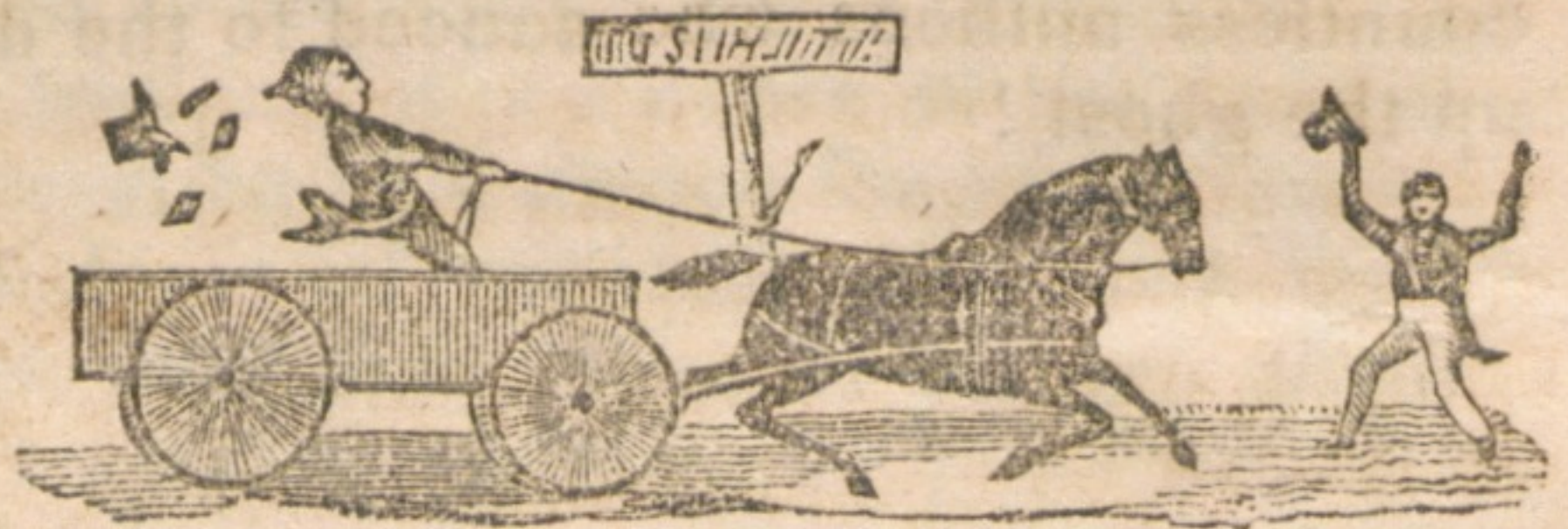


"Plume's"  
Daguerreotype of Tirrell.

The name of the murderer was Albert J. Tirrell, a young man whose improvidence had, in less than one year, scattered to the winds a patrimony of more than twenty-seven thousand dollars—the life's earnings of an indulgent parent, whose grey hairs had but lately gone down in sorrow to the grave. His flushed cheeks, his beak-like, pimpled nose, his gallynipper lips, rendered his demeanor the beau ideal of a sucker-sharp. His tongue could rattle off more lies and oaths in a minute than that of any other sucker in Boston, excepting one. These characteristics, accompanied by the most lavish expenditure of his wealth, won for him

the appellation of "good fellow," all about the horse-stables, at least. Whenever he hired a horse and buggy, he carelessly and suaviously tossed a five dollar gold piece, by way of perquisite, to the ostler. Then would the literature of horse-flies load him with slimy phrases. "Liberal-hearted fine gentleman,"—"noble fellow,"—"there's nothing mean about him,"—"good fellow," etc., often reverberated through the horse-stalls, and the same learned and pithy remarks were nightly circulating through the upper rooms of a celebrated gambling-house in Sudbury street, for many years the sucker-sharp head quarters, and the devil's den in Boston. But, as the enterprising Dickinson once remarked to a clan of rebellious compositors, "There is an end to all things," so the greatneses of Tirrell's life were on that morning hurried into a grand tableau. He had slashed open Maria Bickford's throat with a razor, most valiantly, from ear to ear, and, to slip the noose of the gallows, ran away!

There is no doubt of his IN-SANITY.



Tirrel's Flight.

But we cannot dismiss the subject matter of this history until we inform the world of one of Tirrell's exploits in a business way. No sooner had he tumbled into the possession of his patrimony, than he took up quarters in the city of New York, with the intention of founding a publishing house on a magnificent scale. After beating about the trade for two or three weeks, without knowing where or how to begin a business of which he was utterly ignorant, and which his rattle-headedness rendered him incapable of comprehending under any circumstances, he made up his mind to commence the publication of a periodical, of some kind or other. Our information runs, that, with this object before his eyes, he called on Mr. Edgar A. Poe, of that city, and tendered him the exclusive editorship and control of the concern, without ceremony or condition. Poe, after a cautious and analytical survey of the gentleman, propounded divers queries which Tirrell had not the capacity to answer. He seemed to be possessed of a belief that if he brought some doubled sheets of printed paper before the people, and the ladies in particular, an illumination as wonderful as the aurora borealis would be the consequence. "The people," said he, "want knowledge; they thirst for it as the heart panteth for the water brooks." "Yes, sir, precisely,"



said the other, "but engagements compel me to decline your generous offers; I have already promised to do much more than I can possibly accomplish. I think, however, there is a compositor of my acquaintance whose talents are so nearly like your own, that he would prove the very person you are seeking. I will give you his name—it is Silas Estabrook. Explain your plans to that individual, sir, and there will be no lack of projects, I assure you."

Tirrell was elated with this advice, and forthwith made search for and found the obscure and shrivelled compositor. With the same mountebank bluffness, he made known his wants. "They say you sometimes work in the editing line, sir. Now, sir, I'm about to start a great publishing establishment, like that of the Harpers, and I want to engage you to edit it! If you'll go into it strong with me, we'll make Astors of ourselves. I will furnish all the money to begin with."

Estabrook rubbed his eyes and looked at the man through a spy-glass. "Can it be possible," thought he, "that good luck has found me at last, and that I am about to realize the Actual from my splendid ideas? This must be the very man whom I have wanted so much to find." A long and earnest confab took place. Perhaps two persons never before met, whose brains rattled with more incoherence, than did those of Tirrell and Estabrook. If the first was ignorant, impudent and stupid, the other greatly transcended him by a fanatical adherence to his own visionary fooleries. His plans and projects for astonishing the world were as numerous as the phases of a kaleidoscope, and his explanations thereof were as voluminous and intelligible as a colloquial parody from that useful bird, the goose.

"I will tell you what it is, Mr. Tirrell," said he, "we have a fortune within our grasp. I have the mind and you the means. We must get up something which has never been dreamed of before. It's of no use to think of starting a common newspaper; the very idea of it is vulgar—yet it must be a publication of some kind. Now, I propose that we issue a journal in the shape and style of a LETTER; print it in the smallest type—cram a large amount of racy matter into a small space—and then fold it up and seal it. Let the price be six cents a copy, and a figure indicating this sum can be stamped with red ink on the outside, as though it were the postage by mail. Then let us send a copy to every man, woman, and child, in this great city, under a written direction. In this guise and shape every body will jump after it, and the result will be, that we shall sell at least two hundred thousand copies a day. You see they will be so pleased with the contents, that after they receive the first letter they will be still more and more greedy to get the succeeding ones. Now, just reckon up how much 200,000 letters a day, at six cents each, will amount to in a year."

Tirrell drew from his pocket a ponderous gold pencil and began to cypher. After scratching his head for a half hour he suddenly leaped from his chair in a perfect phrenzy of exultation. The amount was enormous. The golden egg was discovered. Nobody else had found it out. It was the most wonderful idea of the age! He patted Estabrook on the shoulder as fondly as a cat would play with a philosopher's stone, and immediately invited him to partake of a supper of oysters.

The oysters were devoured. During their mastication, Tirrell was overflowing with so much joy that he was unable to sustain a decent composure. His horse-laughes so annoyed the other patrons of the restorateur, that the host politely ordered him to quit the premises. Tirrell



observed the mandate with the most indifferent contempt, and spitting a ten dollar bill on the counter, bawled out for *Wine!* at the full blast of his lungs.

The preliminaries for publishing the great unexpected were soon arranged. Estabrook manufactured the "copy" with the rapacity and zeal of a starving lunatic. The flow of ideas imparted to his eyes an unnatural stare; his brows were knit; and his teeth chattered as if he were undergoing an attack of the delirium-tremens in a wintry blast. But he heeded not himself nor the movements around him, though Tirrell was constantly peeping over his shoulder and mouthing every sentence as it fell from the pen. In two days the "copy" was completed, and placed in the hands of the printer, who was required by written contract to produce the whole edition in five days. Tirrell launched out his money like water in the purchase of fine letter-sized paper; "the trade" greatly marvelled at what was "in the wind;" and the power of steam was brought into full requisition night and day. At the end of the time specified, the immense job was finished, at a cost of \$2,500. Tirrell cashed the bill with readiness and delight. One hundred and twenty-five girls were then hired to double and seal them, and thirty-three clerks were at the same time employed in writing the inscriptions. Every name in Doggett's octavo directory, of something like 400 closely printed pages, was transcribed to a "letter." Estabrook, with becoming dignity, reserved to himself the privilege of giving the finishing touch to the whole, by stamping, after the manner of a post mark, the figure "6" on one corner, which was intended as the price of the article. When this was completed, "all hands" were set about arranging them; and let me say to the reader that this feature was no trifling one. It required the machinery of a great post office to assort and arrange that mass of letters, number by number and street by street. The whole being at length completed at an expense of over \$700 more, the day at length came when the edition was to be glazed into the hands of two hundred efficient carriers, who were to sally forth at the same moment in all parts of the city. Below we give the inner heading of this singular publication, with some extracts, to convey to the reader of these pages a more correct idea of its character and purpose:



*A Truthful Journal of News and Miscellany . . . . Edited by an Invalid.*

#### EDITOR'S SALUTATORY—TO THE READER.

We (myself and thee) are twin-links in that grand chain, which hung out from the primeval chaos that was ere the golden sun shone on a virgin world, and hath come down through the juttings of fifty-nine epochs of time, to this hour. Onward to the future goeth its silvery trail, weaving everlasting issues. . . . But myself and thee move not. Here stand we—links in the grand chain of human destiny—as watchers on a storm beaten rock, whereon also millions are. We hear the sound of voices and of footsteps. Hammers clink and dollars jingle. It is the din of a city. Out in the fields there, the lillies grow and the bee sings. Far away and high in the mountains, where the eaglet's eyrie is, graze the flocks of the humble shep-



herd. Let us bow to the harmony of nature and the majesty of God ! But—but I am astray already. This is not the strain with which I meant to open up to you . . . . Life, you know, is tumultuous; at least, I know it. Half-wrecked already. I am an invalid, seeking through the Race-stubble around me—sympathy ! Forasmuch as my departure to the Great Homestead draweth near, I am panting for those pure vestments of mortality which shall grace its heaven-wide halls. Thus far, how hard to discover ! All my methods are thread-bare and fruitless. But sympathy is a law of the Universe, plentifully abounding, and without its strengthening influences this world were an ungladdened waste. Wherefore I have wrought a new manner to commune with thee—this present . . . . I had a dream lately. A frame of dilapidated bones stood by the side of a stream. The rains pelted and the winds whistled through it. In the place where, in flesh-time, the breath case had been, was a machine of wonderful handiwork—now not less silent and awful than the frame that held it—which might be sacrilegiously likened unto a spinning-jenny. There were its gearings yet; and I named it Mystery. There were its charmed threads—thousands, millions—issuing in all directions, so that the Race were supplied, each with one. And I was amazed to behold how reluctantly Age yielded them up to the eager grasp of Youth. I cried out for the history and the name of his Boneniness. And they said “Fame ! Fame !” And when I heard of the great number who were struggling in their might to rear unto themselves their own frame, with a like appendage—lavishing thereon, with an idol-worship, the genius of the head, of the heart, of the hand—I marvelled much the more . . . . . Cogitate severally, while you contemplate the

## REFLECTIONS OF A TAILOR-POET.

Day hath put on his jacket, and around  
His burning bosom buttoned it with stars.  
Here will I lay me on the velvet moss,  
That is like padding to earth's meagre ribs,  
And hold communion with the things about me.  
Ah me ! how lovely is the golden braid  
That binds the skirt of night's descending robe :  
The twin-leaves quivering on their silken threads,  
Do make a music like the rustling satin,  
As the light breezes smoothe their downy nap.  
Ha ! what is this that rises to my touch,  
So like a cushion ? Can it be a cabbage ?  
It is, it is, the deeply injured flower,  
Which boys do flout with ; but yet I love thee,  
Thou giant rose, wrapped in a green surtout ;  
Doubtless in Eden thou didst blush as bright  
As these thy puny brethren ; and thy breath  
Sweetened the fragrance of the spicy air ;  
But now thou seemest like a bankrupt beau  
Stript of his gaudy hues and essence,  
And growing portly in his sober clothes.

Is that a swan that rides upon the water ?  
Oh no ! it is that other gentle bird  
Which is the patron of our noble calling.  
I well remember, in my boyhood's time,  
When these young hands first closed upon a goose.  
I have a scar upon my thimble finger  
Which chronicles the hour of young ambition.  
My father was a tailor, and his father,  
And my great grandsire : all of them were tailors.  
They had an ancient goose ; it was an heir-loom  
From some remoter tailor of our race.  
I am not certain, but I think 'twas he  
Who through misfortune was unfortunate.  
No matter ; 'tis a joy to straighten out  
One's limb's, and leap elastic from the counter,  
Leaving the petty grievances of earth,  
The breaking thread, the din of clashing shears  
And all the needles that do wound the spirit.



—  
 People on whom the hand of disease permanently mayhap to rest, as in my own case, are not unapt to be cloudy. However this may be as a general thing with others, I am not so. I heartily despise serious confabs. You may reckon it strange, my friend, but the nearer death am I, the more cheerful are my feelings. God is good . . . . But what have we here?

—  
 Set me down as one of small knowledge in things matrimonial. When I happen to stumble over any difficulty in that line, enacting by man and wife, down goes the cap before two crossed-eyes, my heels imitating, at the same instant, a pair of crane's wings. When very young a picture of "Washing Day," in the toy book, where the wife laid her good man sprawling by a well-directed blow from a water-ladle, was to me a source of much amusement; but bachelorship and sad health, have contributed to render the reality of that picture painful.

—  
 Here allow me to take breath and remark, that if perchance any good individuals, having eyed our peregrinations thus far, should happen to begrudge the expenditure of this purchase, and sigh for the luxury of repossessing it again, let them forthwith repair to my sick-room, at No. — Dey street, and the talismanic sixpence shall be refunded. But, my good friends, and my evil friends, be sure of this much; that however kindly or reprovingly you may view the present visionary intrusion of my little thought-messenger, this is the only time it will trouble you, without your own especial command . . . . And now, peradventure, if "The Letter" be so fortunate as to meet with one welcoming smile, I pray the sainted lady or gentleman to drop in a line at the Post Office, directed "Editor of the Letter," commanding its regular visits. And I do also earnestly entreat of such, to enclose me any effusion of their's which they deem worthy of publication, and if worthy it be, I promise that "The Letter" shall go out to the wavy multitude, freighted and enriched with their own ideas. Lend me your countenance and your mind's treasures, and I will hold up to human gaze a casket more sparkling than eye hath yet beheld, and it shall gladden and glorify you . . . . Turn from this to the attractive narration of the Pig-Stealer, commencing the next page.

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 It is high time that this mind-monotony be tied to a post, and the eddy-whirl of community accidents and interests attacked with a skimmer. Perforce, to chouse government out of letter-postage, we sail in the wake of the common newspapers. And if any avaricious limb of the post-office undertake to extort the postage of a letter for the mail-carriage of "The Unexpected Letter," pay it not, my friend, but expostulate with him that we are a newspaper, regularly published and miscellaneous not only, but news-mongering in particular. None of his business what our guise may be.

—  
 Wanted immediately—Five active, able-bodied jokers. Apply to me. None need come without a bag full. Fat folks preferred . . . . Large newspapers are on the decline. Old fashioned murders are getting scarce. Letters are merchandise—a quantity for sale at this office—ONLY six cents a-piece! Something makes me spiteful. Trade fluctuates once in a while! . . . . Short farewells are ominous. I can't be with you *all* the time, my dear one, but if we meet no more the fault will be your own! I will write to you periodically, with the patent assistance of types and steam—never forgetting your important aid—sixpence! Very Cheap! isn't it. If you would say anything to me, write it down, mark "The Unexpected Letter," on the back, and then cram it into that "hole in the wall" at the post office. Send me a pile of rich jokes, or if you have nothing original in that line, cheese and hoe-cake will not be refused . . . . All things must have an end—even I! Adieu! Number Two will pass along in about ten days---not voluntarily though---but if you want it send word! Rare dough in the bake. Don't miss it.

THE INVALID.

—  
 By this time the reader may be a little curious to hear the upshot of this magnificent and fair-promising scheme. At a given moment the whole corps of robust carriers was set in motion by command of Tirrell. Then what a ringing of bells and thumping of knockers was there, in that mighty city! How many fond expectations leaped in the bosoms of



the fairest, as letters were announced to their pretty names! For about an hour all went off like a charm. Tirrell was in his element—passing hurriedly from street to street—advising, cheering, animating all. And as for Estabrook, he was so overcome with joy that he went up garret and stowed himself away among the old furniture, to reflect upon the question whether human nature was mutable, or not?

But the sport was soon over. Several worthy citizens lodged information with the Police, that a great gang of petty swindlers were taking the city by storm, infringing alike upon the post office laws and the finances of the community. Justice Parker, alarmed by this startling news, promptly issued orders commanding all constables and officers to seize the depredators and bring them before the bar of the Court. A scene now took place which beggars description. In all directions there was pulling and hauling and bawling. The people gaped in amazement from door and window and street-corner. Excitement rose to so high a pitch that some of the “fathers of the city” were really terrified with the idea that every body was about to blow up. Some cried out, “The Vandals are in the city!” The boys shouted “fire!” and the women screamed “murder!” Tirrell, watching the great commotion with intense interest, began to clench his teeth and mutter revenge; but he soon became seized of the conviction that nothing of a joke but Sing Sing would be likely to come out of the “flare up.” Then his heels cut the atmosphere with as much celerity as when he was making his escape from the vicinity of the spot where poor Maria Bickford lay weltering in gore.

Violent hands were laid on Estabrook, while in the very heart of his golden reveries; and when they explained to him the cause of his arrest, he doubted his own senses, and declared the whole to be “a spell.” But it was a wakeful one, for Mr. Justice Parker consigned him to an apartment in the “Egyptian Tombs.”

Immured within the walls of a dungeon, for the only time during his previous and hitherto crimeless life, he threw his lank form upon a flea-infected couch and gave vent to an insupportable grief. When this subsided, he began to review the matter stoically. A thought struck him, that the only relief from the horrors of his present situation lay in a full and frank explanation of all the circumstances connected with the affair, demonstrating most clearly his innocence of any intention to commit a fraud; winding up with an affecting appeal to public sympathy; and publishing the document in the penny papers of the following morning. This he did; and the device was successful. The city folks, after learning the facts, laughed at the singularity of the project, and freely bestowed their sympathy upon the dupe of Tirrell. More than twenty thousand individuals on that morning gathered around the “Tombs” and demanded the liberation of Estabrook. Justice P. trembled in his ermine when he looked upon that mob. In former times he had been a raving politician, and a disciple of the mob spirit; he now thought it prudent to grant the demand of that funny populace, by stipulating a trifling bail for the release of the prisoner. This was instantly given, and Estabrook soon made his appearance amidst thunders of applause. He stood on the massive granite steps of the “Tombs,” and, after gracefully bowing to the multitude, made a thrilling harangue about the magic influence of the pennypress, and on human rights in general. When he concluded the multitude gave him three times three.

These occurrences so wrought upon the curiosity of the people of that city, that they were now even more eager to obtain the Unexpected Let-



ter than had been to suppress it the day previous. It was thrown into the hands of a gallant band of newsboys, who cried it by its name for a week, when the edition became exhausted, and Estabrook had "bettered his fortunes" very materially.

Tirrell returned to Boston about five thousand dollars poorer than he left it a month before. If he ever visited the city of New York after this, it was in disguise.

## POSTSCRIPT.

### ARREST OF TIRRELL THE MURDERER!

ON BOARD THE



SHIP SULTANA.

Off New Orleans, December 6th, 1845.

This individual has at last been arrested, and after all hopes had been given up, as it was supposed he had left the country. Captain Youenness, of the First Municipality police, received information last Sunday, by a private letter from New York, that Tirrell had shipped for New Orleans in one of the regular packet ships under the name of William Dennis. He immediately laid the facts before the Recorder, and obtaining the assistance of officers Trescazes, chartered a pilot boat and set sail for the Gulf. They boarded several vessels, but could not find the name of William Dennis among the list of passengers, and began to think their information was incorrect.

At last a vessel hove in sight, on Friday morning last, and on nearing her she proved to be the ship Sultana from New York. They boarded her, and upon inquiring of the captain whether he had a passenger named Dennis, received an affirmative reply—but neither he, the mate, nor any one else, could tell which of the passengers was Dennis. Mr. Bowditch, a custom house officer, being aboard, called the roll of the passengers; when the name of William Dennis was called, a good looking man, in a rough blue pilot-cloth suit, with a glazed cap on his head, stepped out. Youenness said, "Sir, I want you." "What for?" inquired Dennis. "There is no occasion for any conversation; I suspect you know," replied Youenness. "Have you got a warrant?" inquired Dennis. "Yes!" was the reply. "Let me see it." "Here it is," said Y., producing it and handing it to him; "are you satisfied?" "Yes."

The handcuffs were then placed upon his wrists, and when the tow boat Porpoise came along side the officers transferred him to her, and yesterday about twelve o'clock, arrived in this city and took him before Recorder Genois.

He was called up to the Recorder's desk about two o'clock, and Mr. Jarius Vinney, of No. 3 Magazine street, was sworn, and identified the accused as Albert J. Tirrell, from having known him for many years and being brought up in the same village with him. "What is your name?" said the Recorder, looking at the prisoner. There was a pause of a second, in which all eyes were turned upon the suspected man, expecting of course that he would deny his identity; but to the surprise of every one, he said in a soft, mild voice—"Albert J. Tirrell!"

Mr. Bates, of the firm of Bates & Tirrell, also identified the accused as Albert J. Tirrell. The Recorder then informed him that he should commit him, without bail, upon the charge of having murdered Maria A. Bickford, in Boston, until a requisition could be obtained from the Governor of Massachusetts. The prisoner bowed his head and was removed.

There was nothing found upon his person but a revolving pistol, with every barrel loaded and capped. His trunk contained nothing at all. On the way up he endeavored to jump overboard, but was prevented by the officers.

Since his arrival in the city he has maintained the most gloomy silence, scarcely answering the officers who have occasion to address him, and passing the whole of the day in a lethargic state.

There is no little doubt, from his conduct since his arrest, that he will snatch the very first opportunity to commit suicide, that the officers are continually compelled to watch him, or to put him under such restraint that it would be impossible for him to destroy himself.—*New Orleans Picayune.*



## APPENDIX.

## THE LATEST HISTORY OF MRS. BICKFORD AND TIRRELL.

So many and conflicting accounts of these persons, and of their characters and deeds, have appeared in the newspapers, of late, that there is little or no reliance to be placed upon them. We cannot see, for the life of us, what gain or credit will accrue to the press by the wholesale coinage of falsehood and misrepresentation respecting these individuals. An indignant public may yet hold them responsible for these heartless impositions on their credulity. The following, from the Boston Post, though full of errors, contains some particulars, additional to those stated in the preceding pages :

Mrs. B. was born in Bath, Me., but her parents removed to Bangor when she was quite young. At the age of fifteen she was employed in a family as a domestic, and about this period received the addresses of a young seafaring man, named Sandford. Her mother did not think favorably of him, and caused the connection to be promptly broken off. Subsequently Mary became acquainted with Mr. Bickford, and they were married in 1839. Her maiden name was Mary Ann Dunn. Her father has been dead several years, and her mother now resides in Guilford, Me.

The husband and wife lived happily together for about three years. She had one child, which died young. At this time, several female friends of the family, who were about visiting Boston, extended an invitation to Mrs. B. to accompany them ; she accepted it, and the party accordingly came here. While in this city she appeared delighted with every thing she saw—completely captivated—and, on her return home, expressed a desire to reside permanently in Boston. Henceforth, Mr. B. states, she apparently became dissatisfied with her humble condition. She was passionately fond of dressing extravagantly ; but the limited means of the husband prevented her from making that gay appearance she so much desired to do. She now became less affectionate than formerly towards him, and often courted the attentions of a young man who visited their boarding-house.

Business often called Mr. B. from home for several days together, when, it was subsequently ascertained, the individual would make himself agreeable to the wife. His prepossessing appearance and winning address soon had the desired effect upon a mind already ill at ease. He won her confidence, and, of course, had her completely in his power. He offered to take her to Boston, and promised that she should do as she pleased. Her beauty was her ruin. From this date, (October 1842) commences her downward career.

They now planned an elopement. The young man, ascertaining that the schooner Florence, Capt. Fowler, was lying in the stream, just ready for sea, accordingly secured passage in her for himself and victim. Mrs. B.'s husband arriving home at this juncture, it was necessary that herself and seducer should manage with a great degree of shrewdness, in order to lull suspicion. She therefore expressed a desire to Mr. B. to go and reside with her mother at Guilford, during the coming winter. He acquiesced in the proposition ; she commenced packing up her wardrobe, &c., and the unsuspecting husband engaged a carriage to convey her to Guilford on the following day.

In the meantime, by previous arrangements with her paramour, her trunks were placed on board of the schooner, and he subsequently conveyed Mrs. B. on board. The parties were strangers to Capt. F. The vessel immediately put to sea, and in a day or two they arrived at Newburyport and took lodgings at one of the hotels, but shortly afterwards procured private board. Thus matters remained for nearly three months. During this period the forsaken husband could discover no trace of the interesting runaways ; but shortly afterwards he received a letter from his delinquent wife, dated at Newburyport, in which she stated that she should immediately proceed to Boston. In a few days he received a second letter, mailed at B., in which she stated that she was sick and destitute, and wished to see him very much. The inference is that her paramour had exhausted his *funds*, and then left her.

In February, 1843, Mr. Bickford came to Boston, and, after searching for his



wife nearly a fortnight, at length found her at a house of ill fame in North Margin street. She appeared glad to see him, but positively refused again to return to Bangor—upon which he left her, and she continued in the city till July 1st, 1844, when she left for New Bedford.

There she first became acquainted with Albert J. Tirrell, and was soon afterwards his acknowledged mistress. They resided together in that place until the first of February, '45, when they went to New York, stopped at the Astor House a short time, and then proceeded to Philadelphia and various other places.

About the last of February they returned to Boston and stopped at the Pemberton House. From thence they went to the North American House, where they resided three weeks and then left for Albany, Saratoga Springs, &c. After a short absence they again returned and put up at the Hanover House, he always assuming a fictitious name.

At this time Tirrell hired a house in London street, elegantly furnished it, and they removed there. They had two or three female boarders. Upon the front door was placed the name of "Maria Welch,"—Tirrell fearing to use his own name, as the police officers were then in pursuit of him for the crime of adultery.

\* \* \* \* \*

At this time Mr. Bickford resided in this city. After Mrs. B. had found the lost trunk, she called on her husband and requested him to take charge of all her baggage, and immediately hastened to New Bedford. Now affairs between Tirrell and Mrs. B. began to assume a somewhat mysterious aspect.

Tirrell soon ascertained that she had not been home, and he hurried back to Boston in quest of her, and put up at the Shawmut house, where he learned that she had also stopped the day previous, but had now gone to New Bedford.

Mr. B. received a letter from her immediately after her arrival, dated June 18, in which she says, "I am here in New Bedford, but I want to come back. \* \* \* \* \* Albert is not here. *I expect to get killed when he does come!* I must not stay here long."

Tirrell immediately followed her; and the first information Mr. B. received of their doings was contained in letters from Newport, R. I.; one from Tirrell, in which he requested to have Mrs. B.'s trunk sent to him, signing his name to the same, and that of "Maria," evidently intending to make it appear that the latter was her signature. The other letter came from Mrs. B. by the same mail, instructing Mr. B. not to let the trunk go out of his possession at any rate. This is the last time he heard from them until he got a letter dated Albany, July 2, 1844, in which she says, "I am here in Albany, and shall go to the Springs tomorrow. We stopped in New York at the Astor House two days." They also stopped at the Lorillard House, from which they were ejected, owing to their misbehavior there.

The next letter that Mr. B. received was dated Boston, July 19, in which she requests him to bring at the United States Hotel, some clothing and her accordeon, and adds, "call for Mr. Hale, room No. 28. Come as soon as you get this—do not say to any one that we are here."

Mr B. called as requested, and in the course of conversation informed her that some friends whom they had known at Bangor resided at South Boston; she expressing a wish to see them; he consented to accompany her thither. On the way she informed him that Tirrell abused her, that she was afraid of him, and was determined to get clear from him. It would seem that Tirrell suspected her design, for in a short time he came with a carriage to bring her back. The husband used every effort but force to get her to go home. The following letter is the last communication Mr B. received from this unfortunate woman :

Boston, Oct. 1845.

JAMES—I have just received your letter that you wrote so long ago. You want to know all, of course. I left New Bedford and went to Concord, N. H. and from there to Niagara Falls and Vermont State, and back to New York, and now I am in Boston. They have got Albert; they caught him in New Bedford; he got bailed out and will have his trial next Monday; I expect he will be sent to Charlestown. They found him with me, but said it was not me they wanted—but I know they want me for a witness. I am secreted in Boston, and no one knows where except those I stay with. He directed a letter to the Boston post office for me, and says they are trying so find out my name. I have not got one cent; if I had I would come home. I wish you would write to me as soon as you receive this—direct your letter to Mary Jackson.

Your

MARIA.







## Letters, &c. exhibited to the Coroner's Jury.

DECEMBER 10th, 1844.

MY DEAR MARIA:—I shall have to depart for New Bedford by the first train to-morrow, to be absent 8 or 9 days. I much regret not being able to see you, but hope you will be reconciled to my absence, though I am not to yours. But perhaps the following lines will better express my sentiments of regard for you, than I could have done verbally. You know you often say I shall forget you:

### PARTING WORDS TO MARIA.

FORGET THEE?—If to dream by night and muse on thee by day,  
If all the worship deep and wild a loving heart can pay—  
If prayers in absence, breathed for thee to heaven's protecting power—  
If winged thoughts that flit to thee, a thousand in an hour—  
If busy fancy, blending thee with all thy future lot,—  
If this thou call'st FORGETTING, then indeed shalt be forgot.

FORGET THEE?—Bid the forest birds forget their sweetest tune!  
Forget thee! Bid the sea forget to swell beneath the moon!  
Bid the thirsty flowers forget to drink the eve's refreshing dew;  
Thyself forget thine own dear Maine, its mountains wild and blue—  
Forget each old familiar face, each long-remembered spot:  
—When these things are forgot by thee, then thou shalt be forgot!

P. S.—Write to me Sunday. Send your letters to the Parker House, where I shall stay. Be true to me, my love, since all others are false. A. J. T.

BRATTLE SQUARE, Jan. 3.

LOVELY MARIA:—If you are willing, we will take a sleigh ride out to Brighton to-night, and put up at Clarke's. I gave him the wink this morning. He says all is right. Enclosed you will find an order for a shawl, on the establishment of J. & P. These girls cost me a trifle, that's a fact. Never mind, it is'n't as though I was poor, like S. Don't allow him any liberties.—He brags that he can come it over you at any time. If you get into any trouble with the Police, send right down for me, and I'll clear you in ten minutes. The Judges and all the officers want their horses shod, on credit. That Miss Honeycomb is a blasted tooth, and nothing else. I'm clear of her forever.

Good bye,

CAMBRIDGE, Feb. 1.

Our mutual friend, F. D. has broken one of his legs. Good news! The doctor caught him getting down from Henrietta's window, on a long board. In a tremendous rage he dashed it to the ground, and hence the sad mishap. D. may thank his stars at being even so lucky. Jenkins, you know, was shot in the hip for the same offence. They don't manage these things as I do. You see I always come off Scot free. I shall soon graduate, and then I want to take a trip with you up to the White Mountains. It will save trouble to go as though we were married. Adieu—but remember. H. L.

EAST BOSTON, Aug. 28, '44.

SWEET QUEEN:—Be on the Charlestown Bridge at precisely half past two o'clock this afternoon, if you want to go on an excursion down to the Islands. Arrangements have been made for a grand chowder and break-down. Old SMike is to play the banjo. Virginia, the "lioness," will be in the boat. You are to be my partner, and V. is to mate with Jim. We will stay over night, and have an old-fashioned time. That's the way to go it. Now do not fail, Mary; we shall have every thing aboard by half past two. Look out for that jockey who wears the slouched hat. He's laid up, under the doctor's care, just now. I wouldn't be in his boots for a picayune. H. B.

P. S.—I left a set of dead props with you last evening. Have them along, as I calculate to gaff some of the green-horns. Moral: This is a brave world.

No. — STATE STREET, May 29, 1844.

DEAR MARY: I shall not be with you next Tuesday night, as my promise runs. Circumstances, entirely beyond my control, will prevent me. Expect me in a few days. In the mean time, do not meet with that graceless simpleton, Tirrell. He will degrade you to the lowest pitch. I have a small affair to arrange with him that you are not aware of. He will have to bite the dust, or lose his life. Your own, love, C. H. B.